

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, CA

SUBJECT: ELECTION IN FALL 1976 DOUBTFUL

1. QUEBEC PREMIER BOURASSA, IN UNCHARACTERISTICALLY HARD-HITTING REPLY TO P.Q. LEADER RENE LEVESQUE'S WEEKEND ELECTION CHALLENGE, TOLD TV AUDIENCE YESTERDAY EVENING THAT HE SEES NO REASON HOLD FALL ELECTION. IN BEST NON-CANDIDATE STYLE, BOURASSA PORED SCORN ON P.Q. DECLARING THAT A HASTY ELECTION WOULD BE OPEN QUOTES POLITICAL SUICIDE CLOSE QUOTES FOR A PARTY AS DIVIDED AS THE P.Q. EXPLOITING THE RECENT EMBARRASSING DEMISE OF THE P.Q. SPONSORED MONTREAL NEWSPAPER LE JOUR, BOURASSA QUIPPED: OPEN QUOTES IF THE PEQUISTES ARE NOT EVEN CAPABLE OF MANAGING A SMALL DAILY NEWSPAPER OF THE SIZE OF LE JOUR, HOW COULD THEY ASPIRE TO ADMINISTER THE WHOLE PROVINCE?CLOSE QUOTES THE FAILURE OF LE JOUR, BOURASSA CONTENDED, DEMONSTRATES THAT THE P.Q. IS MORE DEEPLY DIVIDED THAN EVER BETWEEN MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS.

2. IN ATTEMPT DISARM INDEPENDENCE OPEN QUOTES TIME BOMB CLOSE QUOTES RECENTLY SET BY LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENT PAYEUR AND MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY SAINT-PIERRE, BOURASSA AVERRED THAT PAYEUR WAS REFERRING ONLY TO OPEN QUOTES HYPOTHESIS CLOSE QUOTES IN WHICH THE REST OF CANADA BECAME SEPARATIST AND THAT SAINT-PIERRE COMPARED AN INDEPENDENT QUEBEC TO PORTUGAL WHICH OPEN QUOTES HAS VERY SERIOUS UNCLASSIFIED

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POLITICAL PROBLEMS AND A STRONG REDUCTION IN ITS STANDARD

OF LIVING CLOSE QUOTES.

3. BOURASSA DEFENDED HIS DECISION TO USE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE OLYMPICS RATHER THAN JUDICIAL COMMISSION. PREMIER ASSERTED CONFIDENCE IN IMPARTIALITY OF ACCOUNTANTS AND EXPERTS APPOINTED BY ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN OLYMPICS TO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS POSED BY PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRERS.

4. FINALLY, BOURASSA TOUCHED ON TEACHERS DISPUTE AND THE LATEST GOVERNMENTAL OFFER WHICH IS NOW THE SUBJECT OF A UNION MEMBERSHIP VOTE. PREMIER CHARACTERIZED OFFER AS OPEN QUOTES QUITE ACCEPTABLE CLOSE QUOTES TAKING INTO ACCOUNT QUEBEC'S FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS AND CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN RICHEST OF OTHER PROVINCES. BOURASSA REFUSED TO SAY WHAT ATTITUDE HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD ADOPT SHOULD THE TEACHERS REFUSE MOST RECENT OFFER. NONETHELESS, HE TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO DENOUNCE C.E.Q. NEGOTIATORS AS REPRESENTING THE MOST RADICAL ELEMENTS IN THE UNION. CLAIMED THEY DO NOT WISH AN AGREEMENT AND CONTINUE TO COMPORT THEMSELVES AS IF THEY WERE IN FRANCE IN MAY 1968.

5. COMMENT:
BOURASSA STATEMENT IS CLEAR INDICATION HE HAS DECIDED NOT TO CALL ELECTION PRIOR TO MANDATORY ELECTORAL CENSUS PERIOD (QUEBEC 202). THIS MEANS NO ELECTION CAN NOW LEGALLY BE HELD PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 14. WHILE SNAP ELECTION DURING SHORT PERIOD BETWEEN NOVEMBER 14 AND ONSET OF WINTER IN LATE NOVEMBER CAN NOT BE EXCLUDED. THIS NOW SEEMS UNLIKELY. WISE MONEY IS BEGINNING TO SHIFT BETS TOWARDS DATES IN LATE SPRING 1977 OR FALL OF SAME YEAR.
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